



## CATAWBA COUNTY EMS

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### Life Saving Program Unveiled

Newton, NC, February 12, 2009 – Catawba County Emergency Medical Services and the Catawba County E-911 Communications Center have entered a joint venture that will provide citizens access to valuable information during life-threatening emergencies.

Catawba County has developed a database that will store information about Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) located throughout our community. An AED is a device used to administer an electric shock (defibrillation) to the heart during certain types of sudden cardiac death.

According to the American Heart Association, coronary heart disease continues to be the single leading cause of death in the United States. Approximately one-half of the deaths attributed to coronary heart disease are caused by sudden cardiac death or death resulting from an abrupt loss of heart function. Research shows that early recognition of the emergency, activation of the Emergency Response System (by phoning 9-1-1 immediately), early CPR, early defibrillation, and early advanced care are important steps in treating victims of abrupt loss of heart function.

“When someone calls 9-1-1 to report a cardiac arrest in Catawba County, an E-911 telecommunicator will be able access this information and notify the caller if an AED is available at his or her location,” said Jodi Carter, Quality Assurance Officer with Catawba County Emergency Medical Services. “In addition, the telecommunicator can provide verbal instructions for performing CPR and operating the AED. This is extremely valuable information as a victim’s chances of survival are reduced by 7 to 10 percent with every minute that passes without CPR and defibrillation. In fiscal year 2008, Catawba County E-911 answered approximately 85,000 9-1-1 calls and Catawba County Emergency Medical Services responded to 22,222 requests for service.”

Churches, schools, businesses and anyone who owns an AED is asked to register the device with Catawba County E-911 by completing an on-line registration form or by calling 828-464-1575. The on-line registration form may be found at <http://www.catawbacountync.gov/aed/>. There is no cost to register an AED and the benefits could save the life of a friend or family member.

Organizations wishing to purchase an AED should contact one of the various AED vendors directly. Contact information for some of these organizations can be located at <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3056596>. As previously stated, research indicates that early defibrillation is an important step in treating victims of sudden cardiac death.

For information about this program, contact Jodi Carter or visit <http://www.catawbacountync.gov/aed/>.

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